

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 DODE-00
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 ACDA-07 MC-02 H-01 IGA-02
OMB-01 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 TRSE-00 NEAE-00 /069 W
-----097150 271242Z /45

P 271206Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7281

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 4489

NEA FOR ATHERTON; PM FOR GELB AND ERICSON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, TS

SUBJ: TUNISIAN PURCHASE OF VULCAN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM

REF: SECDEF MSG 211720Z JUNE 77, CONFIDENTIAL 1745

1. SUMMARY. DURING THE VISIT (24-26 JUNE 77) TO TUNIS BY LTG FISH, DIRECTOR, DSAA WE DISCUSSED, INTER ALIA, WAYS TO EXPEDITE DELIVERY OF THE TWO BATTERIES OF VULCAN AIR DEFENSE WEAPONS WHICH TUNISIA DESIRES TO PURCHASE. IT APPEARS TO US THAT THE MOST EXPEDITIOUS MANNER OF HANDLING THIS PROBLEM IS FOR GOT TO SIGN A LETTER OF INTENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND THE LETTER OF OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE (LOA) AS SOON AS IT CAN BE PROVIDED. WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO WAIVE CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION TIME OF THE VULCAN FOR TUNISIA. END SUMMARY.

2. GENERAL FISH BROUGHT US A GREAT DEAL OF MOST WELCOME NEWS. WE FEEL MUCH BETTER ABOUT OUR EFFORTS TO ASSIST THE TUNISIANS IN UP-GRADING THEIR ANTIQUATED DEFENSE POSTURE. I PERSONALLY APPRECIATE THE FINE EFFORTS OF DEFENSE AND STATE IN HELPING TUNISIA.

3. AS WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY EMPHASIZED, TUNISIA IS TRYING TO HAVE
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A VIABLE AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM IN BEING BY THE END OF CY 79. WE HAVE THE CHAPARRAL PROGRAM WELL DOWN THE PATH AND GENERAL FISH HAND-CARRIED TO US THE LOA ON THE FAAR RADAR.

4. WE DISCUSSED AT LENGTH WITH LTG FISH THE BEST WAY TO HANDLE THE VULCAN PURCHASE. AS YOU KNOW THE VULCAN IS A COMPLIMENTARY AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM TO THE CHAPARRAL AND IS ORGANIC TO OUR

U.S. ARMY DIVISIONAL CHAPARRAL-VULCAN AIR DEFENSE BATTALIONS.
THE VULCAN IS A NON-CONTROVERSIAL, CONVENTIONAL
20-- & 7, 6 53..

5. THE NORMAL LEAD TIME AND CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
VULCAN WOULD PLACE DELIVERY WELL AFTER THE 1979 TIME FRAME
IF THE LOA IS NOT SIGNED UNTIL SEPTEMBER 1977. WE UNDERSTAND
THE ARMY CAN EXPEDITE DELIVERY TO TUNISIA IF THE TUNISIANS
CAN SIGN A LETTER OF INTENT IN JULY AND THE FORMAL LETTER OF
OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE BY EARLY AUGUST. GENERAL FISH AND HIS
PEOPLE ARE WORKING ON BOTH THESE LETTERS NOW. THE LETTER OF
INTENT WILL PLACE THE TUNISIANS UNDER OBLIGATION TO PURCHASE
THE VULCAN AND THE ARMY CAN PUT THE WHEELS IN MOTION TO GET
LONG-LEAD TIME ITEMS PURCHASED.

6. STATE DEPARTMENT COULD HELP US BY REQUESTING A WAIVER TO
THE NORMAL 20 DAY ADVANCED CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION FOR THE
VULCAN PURCHASE. WE UNDERSTAND THAT CONGRESS CAN ACCEPT A
5-DAY NOTIFICATION ON NON-CONTROVERSIAL WEAPONS SYSTEMS. RE-
DUCING CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION TIME WOULD
HELP US GET A FORMAL LOA TO THE TUNISIANS IN TIME FOR AN
EARLY AUGUST SIGNATURE AND WOULD PERMIT OUR TUNISIAN FRIENDS
TO REALIZE THEIR COMPLETED AIR DEFENSE BATTALION IN THE 1979
TIME FRAME.

7. I AM PERSONALLY REQUESTING STATE DEPARTMENT ASSISTANCE IN
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HELPING DOD EXPEDITE THE LETTER OF OFFER AND BEPTANCE BY
WAIVING THE NORMAL CONGRESSIONAL NTOFICATION TIME. THANK YOU
FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT TO US IN TUNISIA.
MULCAHY

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NNN

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